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ABSTRACT

Effective informational writing assignments show students that creativity and imagination are essential to the generation of new ideas in all content areas. A collection of these assignments has been arranged into five categories of increasing complexity based on the following criteria: whether the point of view is assigned as self-selected; whether the imagined audience for the text is informal or formal; whether the imagined point of view is that of a real or anonymous historical person; whether students are asked to assume one or more than one point of view; and whether students are asked to reorganize information in a new way. These assignments encourage an integration of facts and ideas from various perspectives, give students the opportunity to write for different purposes and audiences in the content areas, permit historical and scientific information to be presented in a non-expository form, and encourage students to think about the feelings and attitudes of others. (Numerous samples of student writing are included.) (MM)

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IMAGINATION, WRITING, AND THE INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Sandra Stotsky

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IMAGINATION, WRITING, AND THE INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Sandra Stotsky

Although many children like to do informational writing, too much of it seems to be little more than lifeless collections of facts. It seldom suggests much imagination, creative thinking, or personal involvement. Moreover, few teachers see informational writing as a kind of writing that could stimulate creative or divergent thinking or the use of the imagination. For many teachers, "creative" and "imaginative" are adjectives that apply only to literary kinds of writing. Many elementary/junior high school writing programs (and language arts texts for teachers) even divide writing into two categories, one of which is usually labeled "creative," while the one that includes informational writing is labeled "practical," "functional," or "expository." One wonders if these attitudes and descriptive terms have influenced the way in which teachers have taught informational writing and whether they are themselves in any way responsible for the dull quality of so much of it.

For the past several years, I have been collecting writing assignments devised and used by imaginative teachers in the elementary/junior high school (primarily social studies teachers) to stimulate more interesting writing in the content areas and to show how creative thinking can be part of informational writing. I have also been trying out similar kinds of writing assignments in demonstration classes for elementary and junior high school teachers.

Revised version of a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the New England Association of Teachers of English, Bedford, New Hampshire, October 1983.

Most of the assignments I have collected--or devised--involve role-playing, or the taking on by the writer of an imagined point of view. In other words, students are asked to pretend they are someone other than themselves and to incorporate content area material into a piece of writing for an imagined audience, or reader. However, the assignments seem to vary in the demands they place upon students during the thinking and writing process. After looking over many different examples of such assignments, I have sorted them into several different types. In this paper, I will describe these different types and some examples of writing assignments for each type, illustrated wherever possible by samples of student writing that were rated highly by the students' own teachers. I will also suggest some teaching tips for teachers who might wish to devise similar kinds of assignments. I believe that teachers who use such writing assignments help to transform what Luria (1976) calls the "reproductive imagination" of the pre-school child into the "true creative imagination" in the school-age child that is based on verbal, logical thinking (pp. 135-136).

Types of Imaginative Informational Writing

I have arranged these types in a suggested order of increasing complexity, based on a consideration of the following features: whether the point of view is assigned or self-selected; whether the imagined audience for the text is informal or formal; whether the imagined point of view is that of a real historical person or an anonymous historical person; whether students are asked to assume only one or more than one point of view about the topic; and whether or not they are asked to reorganize information and ideas in a new way. Although I offer reasons, not empirical evidence, to support my suggestions about what types of assignments seem harder than others, there is empirical evidence from McQuillan's (1984) research on children's responses to different kinds of role-playing assignments that shows that formal informational writing is much more difficult than informal informational writing.

TYPE I. The easiest kind of assignment seems to be the one in which children are assigned a specific historical role and asked to convey specific information in an informal piece of writing. This kind of assignment appears to be relatively easy because students have a clearly defined role to imagine, can ignore many of the organizational issues that would have to be worked out for a formal text, and can concentrate mainly on the information to be conveyed. Sample 1 is an example of such an assignment. (On all samples, I have typed the name of the teacher who devised the assignment and the school system in which the writing was done.) As part of a unit on the American Revolutaion, a Grade 7 teacher asked her students to pretend they were Green Mountain Boys with Ethan Allen during the capture of Fort Ticonderoga. They were to write a letter to one of the Sons of Liberty in Boston informing them of this capture. So far as the teacher was concerned, the student's letter contains almost all the essential information. At the same time, it arouses the reader's interest and suggests the writer's interest in the topic far more than an answer to an essay question might have done.

TYPE II. A more difficult kind of assignment, I believe, is when children are assigned a point of view for an anonymous historical person and have some choice in the information they will convey in an informal piece of writing. In such assignments, students must think carefully about the adequacy of the information they embed in their writing in order to create a specific person at one moment in time. If the writing lacks enough historical details to convey the imagined context, the first draft will seem like a contemporary document. Sample 2 is an example of this kind of assignment and problem. A Grade 7 student was asked to pretend to be a Loyalist who had fled to Canada at the time of the Revolution and to write a letter to a cousin who was a Patriot to explain the choice he or she had made. Sample 3 shows the revision of this piece of writing for the student's English teacher, who was working

in a team-teaching arrangement with his social studies teacher. Through her response to the first draft, the English teacher was able to help the student deal with the problem of insufficient information in the first draft and to produce a credible imaginary primary source document in a revised draft.

Sample 4 is another example of this type of assignment. A Grade 6 teacher asked his students to pretend they were one of the first colonists in Plymouth and to write a letter to a relative in England about the hardships of daily life. Thinking about the activities of long-ago daily life from a personal point of view may have stimulated a deeper appreciation of the Pilgrims' struggle for survival than writing an answer to a quiz question would have done.

Another example of this type of assignment was given by a Grade 4 teacher as part of a study unit on the westward migration in America in the 1800s. Children were asked to pretend they were part of a pioneer family moving westward and to write a letter to a close friend in the eastern state they had left. As a pre-writing activity, children were asked to brainstorm facts for six major categories: clothing, housing, food, transportation, work, and leisure-time activity. This was done as a class. Then they were to brainstorm, individually, ideas and details for the specific child they had decided to pretend to be, drawing facts from each of the six categories. Peer evaluations after the first draft had been written were extremely useful in helping the children to deal with the problem of insufficient information in their first drafts.

Sample 5 shows the extension of this kind of assignment to multiple roles related in time. In this homework assignment, Grade 6 students were asked to pretend that they were, first, a citizen of Athens writing a letter to a friend. In this letter, they were to tell about their daily life and concerns and work in as much historical information as they could from all the references they had looked up. Then they were to do the same as if they were a citizen of Sparta. Notice how this assignment can be a substitute for a comparison essay.

TYPE III. More difficult are assignments that ask children to take a point of view for a formal piece of writing, whether or not they are given a clearly defined point of view with specific information to convey. These kinds of assignments are difficult because students must meet all the organizational demands of a formal piece of writing. As preparation for these kinds of assignments, it is helpful for students to read real examples of the forms of writing they are being asked to write. Sample 6 is an example of this kind of assignment when students are assigned the role of a real historical person at a specific moment in time. A Grade 7 teacher asked her students to pretend that they were Benjamin Franklin and that they had been sent to France to talk the French king into giving the Americans aid during the Revolution. They were to write a short speech convincing the king that France should help the Americans, telling what would happen if he did and what might happen if he didn't. As Sample 6 shows, this student was able to craft a coherent and effective argument.

Sample 7 is an example of such an assignment when the writer is given more latitude about the information to be conveyed. Grade 5 children were asked to pretend they were obituary writers for a newspaper and to write an obituary for Martin Luther King for a contemporary newspaper at the time of his assassination. This writing was part of a unit on black history during the month of January. The children's obituaries were judged by their teacher to be an excellent substitute for the usual biography that students are often asked to do when they are studying famous people in history. The headlines they created, such as "Martin Luther King, A Peace Fighter is Dead," or "Martin Luther King, Negro Rights Leader Assassinated," suggest that writing an obituary helped the children to focus on his historical significance.

Another example of this kind of assignment was given by a Grade 7 teacher as part of a unit on pre-revolutionary America. Her students were assigned the role of a newspaper reporter and asked to write a news report about the Boston Massacre for a colonial newspaper. Sample 8 shows one child's news story. Again, this kind of assignment makes for far more interesting reading than a straightforward answer to an essay question would.

Sample 9 is a different example from another Grade 7 class. In this demonstration class, I asked students who had just finished a study unit on the Soviet Union to pretend they were travel agents and to write a travelogue encouraging tourists to visit Russia. The students first brainstormed together the kinds of things visitors might like to see or learn about in several categories: cultural attractions, geographical features, structure of government, and historical highlights. Their writing was personal and lively yet clearly contained the important information their teacher wanted them to remember.

TYPE IV. A more challenging type of assignment asks students to approach the same event or topic from more than one perspective. As one example, a Grade 7 teacher had students write two newspaper reports on the Boston Massacre. In one, they took the side of the British, in the other, the side of the colonists. This teacher wanted his students to gain an understanding of perspective in news reporting and of the need to "read between the lines."

Much more difficult than two assigned points of view about the same topic or event is the assignment in which the student must decide upon the two points of view. The student must think creatively about what could be two points of view about a particular subject. As one example of this type of assignment, I asked Grade 6 students in a demonstration class to decide upon two points of view to express in two imaginary primary source documents of their choice after they had done library research on a topic of their choice from material on Ancient Egypt, Greece, or Rome. Class discussions and individual conferences helped the students to work out their two points of view. One student who chose

describing a typical day (Sample 10) for her first point of view; for her second point of view, she wrote an invitation by the child's parents to a group of friends for a symposium, or dinner party (Sample 11). Another student chose to do research on King Tut. Her first point of view was an inspired final entry in dying King Tut's journal (Sample 12), the second, a letter from his friend, Prince Hekenefer (Sample 13).

A third example of this assignment suggests another dimension to the use of dual points of view assignments. Instead of two perspectives on one subject in time, students can create two perspectives about one subject over time, much like what James Michener did in The Source. As one example of this fictional technique, one student chose as her first point of view a letter written by a young girl living on a hillside in 438 B.C., in which she describes to her sister the construction of the Parthenon (Sample 14). Her second point of view is an entry in a diary by a different young girl living on the same hillside over 2000 years later. In this entry (Sample 15), she describes her reaction to the destruction of the Parthenon during the Venetian Wars with the Turks in 1687. Class discussions about possible examples drawn from the material they are studying are important for the successful use of this technique. Such writing assignments can help children to develop a deep sensitivity to historical changes.

TYPE V. Assignments I would judge to be at the highest level of thinking require the student to go beyond the information he or she has acquired. They ask the student to think creatively about the facts and ideas they are learning in order to develop a new organization for them. Students may recombine what they know for either contemporary, past, or future historical contexts. As one example, a Grade 8 teacher as part of a unit on different immigrant groups to this country asked her students to pretend they were members of the British Parliament in the 1840s and to devise a solution to the Irish Famine. Sample 16 is one student's proposal. In the case of a solution to a historical problem, students must devise

a reasoned and reasonable alternative to the actual historical solution.

Sample 17 is an example of this type of assignment, based on several science units, from a Grade 5 class. For this assignment, students were asked to develop a one-floor model or diagram of an imaginary museum of natural history or science and to write an explanation/description of their model or floor plan. They were to imagine themselves as architects or museum curators proposing a new museum to an imaginary Board of Trustees. This assignment drew upon the students' visits to a local musuem of natural history and their recent study of mammals, ecology, and the solar sytem. In developing their model or floor plan, the children were asked to devise a rationde for the particular exhibits they would propose and the lay-out of the rooms. In other words, they had to offer reasons for their choice of exhibit rooms and the order in which a visitor might go through them. Sample 17 is one student's explanation and Sample 18 is the floor plan he created for his museum. This particular student's writing displays a very high level of original and logical thinking in the rationale he devised as well as a remarkable integration of the knowledge he had acquired in his science units. His classroom teacher told me that a life chain of predators and their prey had not been the focus of study in their science units. Samples 19 and 20 are the diagram and explanation by another student in this class. Inspired by a visit to the Museum of Science in Boston, his model used a human body as its basic shape. It is worth noting that this particular assignment was especially appealing to the boys in this class.

Other examples of this type of assignment may be found in writing that describes scientific inventions, models of imaginary parks and cities, or invented countries and peoples. Interestingly, invented solutions, utopias, etc. need not be expressed only in prose. Sample 21 shows what one student wrote in response to an assignment in Grade 7 in which students were asked to write a poem describing their

model society after reading about an experimental model society that Robert Owen wished to create.

Summary

The different kinds of writing assignments I have described in this article have many values. First, they allow children to write from a personal point of view about content area material and encourage an integration of facts and ideas from various perspectives. Thus, they permit considerable individuality and may help children to acquire and integrate knowledge more effectively than do "straight" assignments. Second, they give children opportunities to write for different purposes and different audiences in the content areas. Too much writing in the content areas is shaped only for the teacher's eyes and conveys nothing more than mastery of content. Multiple points of view assignments, especially, encourage children to experiment with different degrees of distance from one subject or audience, depending on the point of views that are assigned or selected. Third, these kinds of assignments allow historical and scientific information to be used in non-expository forms of writing, such as letters, journals, and diaries, as well as in other real but less used forms of informational writing in the schools, such as obituaries and explanations of floor plans. Children begin to learn that important information can be found in non-expository kinds of writing as they extend the range of writing they do in the language arts class to the content areas. Fourth, they encourage children to think about the feelings and attitudes of others. Above all, they show children that informational writing can be imaginative and creative as well as factual.

Concluding Remarks

At a time when computer literacy is being hailed as the wave of the future, it is crucial for children to learn at an early age that the computer can never be a substitute for a well-informed mind with an imagination. Our approach to informational writing badly needs to be modified. Children need to learn that creative thinking is as much a part of good academic writing as it is of other kinds

of writing and that the imagination plays as much of a role in generating new insights and ideas in every field of knowledge as it does in the arts. Samuel Johnson (cited in Engell, 1981) claims that the imagination is nothing without knowledge. On the other hand, Albert Einstein (cited in Moore, 1969) maintains that the imagination is more important than knowledge in scientific research. However, Jacob Bronowski (1978) seems to weigh both factors equally in the development of new knowledge.

In this paper, I have provided examples of a number of different writing assignments drawing upon material studied in eleven social studies classes and one science class that show how creative thinking and the imagination can be tapped for informational writing. These assignments appear to allow for considerable individuality and may help children to acquire and integrate knowledge more effectively than do "straight" assignments. Moreover, these writing assignments suggest that the subject matter of the content areas can provide English teachers with an extraordinarily rich and almost limitless source of information for their children's writing in the English or language arts class--a source that ensures that all children will have something intellectually substantial to write about. Indeed, it is just as important for students to learn how to compose with ideas and facts they are acquiring in their other academic subjects as it is with ideas and facts drawn from personal experience or literature. English/language arts teachers, too, should be devising writing assignments that ask their students to integrate knowledge from a personal perspective and to manipulate that knowledge for imaginative solutions to real situations or problems in the past, present, or future. Developing writers should not be limited to

writing about only their experience or their responses to the literature they read. Instead, they should be asked to go beyond their experiences and to use their imaginations for seeing facts and ideas from different perspectives and in different ways. Indeed, all teachers in every area of the curriculum need to use their own imaginations more often and devise writing assignments that challenge their students' imaginations as well as encourage the integration of knowledge.

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A

B

Sample 1
Elizabeth Cordeau, teacher
Grade 7
Plymouth Public Schools, MA

am Post. 7-3B
Dec. 4, 1983
Letter

Please work on your handwriting!

Ft. Ticonderoga, N.Y.
May 16, 1775

My dear Mr. Jackson,

The Green Mountain Boys → conquered Fort Ticonderoga last night. We left the Vermont shore in → boats. When we reached the fort → Ethan Allen told us to capture the guards outside and he would get everybody inside. When Ethan Allen got to the commander's room he held a knife to → the commander's neck. The → commander quickly surrendered. Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys are holding Ft. Ticonderoga. There are guns and ammunition to be taken to Boston.

Good organization Sincerely,

Mt. Boy John

Please write larger & margin.

using Facts

Well written

Sample 2
Maureen Metta, teacher
Grade 7
Plymouth Public Schools, MA.

[redacted]

Jan 6, 1983

Dear Cousins,

Hi, how is everything down in the colonies? I'm doing much better up here. I had to get away from there, especially after I was almost killed in the massacre at Boston. I find it much more peaceful up here after all that! And I don't think the colonies will be that safe a place to stay during the Revolution. That's why I left and came up here to Canada. The colonies are really doing things to get the English mad such as that incident with the tea. So if I were you I would be expecting war anytime and more. Be careful.

Not enough information. Your cousin,

[redacted]

Why?

Why?

Why? Do you agree?

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Sample 3
Maureen Metta, teacher
Grade 7
Plymouth Public Schools, MA

essay question
draft # 2

much more informative! Well-written.

A

7A English
1/12/83

Dear Cousins,

I hope you understand why I left, I wanted to come up here to Canada because I was sick of being treated harshly, and I didn't want to end up getting hung, like some of my friends. The colonists were treating the loyalists real bad. They were burning our houses and selling the land to raise money for their weapons. I just had too much to lose by being robbed or having my house burnt down. I was afraid of being there during the time of any fighting because, even though I am a loyalist, I wouldn't fight against my own cousins. And-plus, I think you should have a right to fight for your newly found freedom. But I still feel somewhat loyal to my home country. So I wouldn't fight against England either.

The colonists are doing things to upset the English. R.S. Such as the incident with the tea. So I would be expecting war anytime now. Please be Careful. And please try to understand

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Sample 4
Chris Johanson, teacher
Somerville Public Schools, MA
Grade 6

March 19, 1625
Plymouth
Colony

Dear Son,

How are things in England. Things are pretty ~~tough~~ here in Plymouth because of the winter months. But I'm happy to be here. There is a lot of work to be done this week. The men of the colony have to build a cabin for the Games' family, set up a way of learning for the children, and get more firewood for each family to burn during the bitterly cold winter. All of this has to be done even though snow is already on the ground. You might think, from the words above, women and children have an easy life. Of coarse that is not true. The women have to clean and cook the food teach and take care of the children, and take care of the ill. The children have a big job too. They help the women and some older boys help build cabins. They will also carry on our beliefs and religion. Son, as you have read, you see the hardships that we now have. Yet we have many good times too. But most of all we have our freedom. I hope you will come join me and the other colonists. Please say hello to the rest of the family

Love,
Mom

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Athens to Sparta

Sample 5, Page 1
Cindy Benko, teacher
Grade 6
Brookline Public
Schools, MA

Dear Gorgon,

How are you my good friend? I've just returned from the market place, where I have bought many delicious fruits and decorations for my house. Our leader Pericles, has made a wonderful proposal, to be announced at the assembly tomorrow. My friend Demos spoke at the assembly today, and got a circle of boos and hisses from the assembly. My son is in school and my wife is teaching my daughters and slaves, so I have a lot of peace and quiet in my house. I have to end this letter because I have to meet my friends at the gymnasium.

Sincerely yours,

Triggs

Sparta to Athens

Dear Darbandi,

I'm in training with the army. I won't be able to see my family for a long time. Our bodies are getting hardened by the minute. The leaders are our trainers. I'm going to enter in the Olympic games next year, representing Sparta for wrestling. Life is filled with battle.

Sincerely,

Landon

Sample 5, Page 2

Sample 6
J. Ashley, teacher
Grade 7
Plymouth Public Schools, MA

Beta
4/6/83

Sir, I have come from America to ask you to help us in our revolution from England. We are fighting with few soldiers and little ammunition or money. You are the only ones who can help us.

You must be asking yourself, "So whats in it for us?" I'll tell you. By helping us you will deal a great blow to England if ~~you~~ we win. When we become a free country, we will open trade with France, which was closed by England. If we do not get your help, we will very likely lose. And if we lose, it could be devastating to your country. If England regains control of North America, not only would there never be a chance of free trade, but your enemy would keep gaining power. Eventually England well be able to crush France without a thought. Great Britian would take over the world. If that is the way you want things, do not help us. If you want a free world, give us aid so together we can stop England. The choice is yours.

1968 APRIL 15

Sample 7
Deborah Mercer, teacher
Grade 5
Dalton School, NYC

MARTIN LUTHER KING, FIGHTER FOR BLACK RIGHTS FOUND DEAD

Memphis Tennessee, April 4, Martin Luther King was shot off a balcony at The Lorraine Hotel one hour before a speech.

Martin Luther King was born on Jan. 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. When Martin was a teenager he went to Morehouse College. In 1964 Martin Luther King was proud to win a Nobel Prize. In 1965 Dr. King conducted a bus boycott which gained followers in the equal rights movement.

Martin Luther King will be remembered because of his determination to help Negroes win their equal rights with non-violence.

Martin's survivors are his wife Coretta Williams, his two daughters Bernice and Yolanda, and his sons Dexter and Martin Luther King III.

Ye Olde Boston Times

Sample 8
A. D'Elia, teacher
Grade 7
Plymouth Public Schools, MA

March 6, 1770

5p per paper

Excellent Letter! A

Riot in Boston: leaves five dead

Yesterday, a group of citizens, started a protest against a British soldier. After a while he came out of his guard house when the men came toward him. A group of about eight soldiers looked on ready to protect the soldier if the protesters attacked. They started to push him so these soldiers came out, armed and ready for battle. One man, Crispus Attucks, dared a soldier to shoot him, knowing that he wasn't allowed to shoot him. At this he pushed him to the ground. The soldier got up and shot Attucks. This started a riot. In the end a total of five Bostonians were killed. Captain Preston, the captain of this troop, will be taken to court along with all eight soldiers of his. The prosecuters will be those who were at the riot. The prosecuters are hoping for the court to take the case now, but it is not expected for about four months.

Sample 9, Page 1
Sandra Stotsky, teacher
Grade 7
Rutherford County Schools
North Carolina

U. S. S. R.

An interesting country to See

Now would you like to spend two luxcious
weeks in intriguing Soviet union? Climb
the Ural mountains. See large wheat fields.
If you want to learn more read on.

The Dexiption of the Soviet Union

It is on the continent of Eurasia. The
capital of the Soviet is Moscow. The country
is much larger than the United States.
But there is much more to see. Youll visit
the 15 republics of the Soviet. Youll see
Museums in Moscow with old and new
artifacts. Youll visit Kiev the Soviets' first
kingdom. Read on and be more intrigued.

The farms of the Soviet

Here youll see large wheat fields
blowing in the wind. Youll see State
farms and collective farms. Youll see large
Soviet crops which are Rye, potatoes, wheat,
and barley. Youll eat borsht and black bread
Soviet farmers favorite food. On your trip
youll have the time of your life. So
read on and find out more.

The Soviet Government

The Soviet people have a presidium instead of a president. They are run by the communist party. That took over in 1917. Lenin was the first father of communism. Learn how this kind of government works. Go on the U.S.S.R tour. Read on and find out more.

Soviet History

The history of the Soviet Union is very interesting. Just like the country itself. Here's a little information on it. Czars ruled till 1917 and before the czars. Mongols ruled for 100 years. You'll have a great time on the U.S.S.R tour. Sign up now. You'll be glad you did.

FIRST DRAFT
Grade 6

Sample 10, Page 1
Sandra Stotsky, teacher
Grade 6
New York City Public Schools

[redacted]

A day from a child's Journal

First of Gamelion

My name is Alexander. I am 12 and I live in Athens. In school today my paidotribe (he is my physical trainer) helped me with my wrestling. I wrestled with my brothers for practice. Then my paidotribe helped me with my diskos throwing. I can now get the diskos to go a fair distance. Then my grammatiste (writing instructor) had me do two lessons. My kitharistes (instructor in the lyre) taught me a new chord. I can now play songs quite well.

Then I could stop my studies. I played with my friend Leon. We had cock-fights. This game lasted most of the afternoon. Then we grew tired of it and began to have

paces. Soon mother calls me in to dinner. She is serving sausages, vegetables, fish, and wine. For the children there is goats milk to drink. I have very little work and chores today and I finish them off quite quickly. Now, I wash and go to sleep.

Alexander

FIRST DRAFT

Invitation to a party

Dear Dion,

Alexander, a pottery painter and his wife, Helena, are pleased to invite you to a symposium. Please come on the first of Anthesterion to our home, number 10, Plateia. The symposium should go until late at night. There will be food, drink and entertainment. Foods served will be wheat and barley as a broth, sausages, vegetables, honey, olive oil fruit and fish. The wine will be mixed with water at a proportion of 3(water) to 1(wine). Entertainment will consist of flute girls, dancing, conversation and a performance on the lyre by Daphne from Thebes. If the weather is clear, the festival will be held in the courtyard. If stormy, it shall be held in the left room on the north side of the courtyard. We

would be most honored by
your presence in our home.
Alexander
and his wife
Helena

Sample 12, Page 1
Sandra Stotsky, teacher
Grade 6
New York City Public Schools

FIRST DRAFT

2/21/23

Journal

I king Tut am at my last stage of living. I have had a very merry, exciting life. In this journal I am going to talk about my life. I hope somebody will find it and share it with their friends, and the friends will share it with their friends soon the journal will be around the world. When people think of me, they will know to think of me as I was, a merry, exciting, nice, powerful person. Not a normal, everyday, mean, non-helpful, stupid person. I am me! I am king Tutankhamun.

I, as a young boy, went to school in the palace everyday. I had started school when I was four. There are five children like me in the school. We sit on the floor crossed legged. On our laps we hold our palettes. We would sit straight and steady. We would use reed pens to write with. Of course we would have to dip the pens in ink. Unlike the children the teacher had red ink to correct our work with. I would erase my mistake with my sandstone eraser. I would then smooth the papyrus(paper) so I would be able to write on that spot again. When my teacher says "Remember boys what you gain in one day at school is for enternity. The work done here is as lasting as mountains" the day of school is over.

My brother Amenhotep IV is a pharaoh. Unlike me and my father he does not like to hunt. He thinks about animals and he writes about them. He puts them in his hymn to

he had built for him in the sand where, at one point was nothing. The city is sometimes called the city of the Disc.

When my father who was also a pharaoh died, very strange things started to happen. Soldiers were breaking down statues of the gods. Temples of the god which my father worshipped Amun had been closed. Even the statue of my father had been broken to pieces. All of this had been done under my brother's orders. Under my brothers rule nobody is allowed to worship Amun anymore. He had changed his name because Amenhatep means "Amun is content." His name is now Akenaton which means "He who is agreeable to Aton." The people of Thebes are very unhappy about this. They all hate my brother. All day I heard shouting from the streets. Egypt had definately changed.

It had been decided that I was to be married at the age of eight years to Ankhesenpaaten Now I am eight, she is eleven. We had been married one year when suddenly we heard people running about in the palace. I had asked what was the comotion? My two brothers were dead. Now who was to be pharaohs.

I but was made pharaoh because I was the son of a pharaoh, my wife was the daughter of a pharaoh. There was no other men left in the family but me.

I did not want people to hate me like they hated my brother. I reopened trade with byblos. New barges were made for the gods. I caused alot of things to be built. I had many festivals. I met and wrote with foreign princes and kings But most of all I let people pray to

his name is in my name. After ruling in the City of the Sun for four years I moved to Thebes. After what my brother did, the name Aton offends the people of Thebes. Therefore I changed my name from Tutankhaton to Tutankhamun. My wife has changed her name from Ankhesenpaaten to Ankhesenamun.

Now I am eighteen living in bed all alone. I hope the people of Egypt will never forget me. For I even in Heaven shall never forget them. Good-bye my people. Good-bye.

King

Tutam

Sample 13
Sandra Stotsky, teacher
Grade 6
New York City Public Schools

FIRST DRAFT

Dear Tut,

How have you been these past years? I miss you very much. I long to see you again. I wish we were back at the schoolroom together. I don't care if we would have to listen to our teachers lectures or if we would have to copy another story from the board, as long as I am with you. I could sit down for weeks just thinking about us as little boys. Remember after school when we had wrestling matches. I also just remembered how much fun we had in the swimming pool. Have you seen or heard of the master-at-arms who took us hunting with bows and arrows? I wonder how he is. If you know or find out anything please tell me.

I heard you are now King Tutankhamun. And I am now Queen Nefertiti. We might see each other soon because kings and princes meet alot. Do you remember how I used to make you laugh by blinking my eyes very fast, my ears twitch at me not doing that too. He reminds me of you very much. Everytime I look at him I see your face.

Sometimes I wish that I was just sitting and relaxing under the sycamore tree playing senet with you. Oh yes, those were the good old days. Till we learn more we to bigger and better things. That is a big switch from childhood. Until we meet, good-bye.

Sincerely,
Your old friend
Ni...

Sample 14, Page 1
Sandra Stotsky, teacher
Grade 6
New York City Public Schools

FIRST DRAFT

2/20/83

(The equivalent of 438 B.C.)

My dear sister, A very important event has occurred. Right near where our home is a new temple for worshipping has been built on the Acropolis. It is for worshipping the patron goddess of Athens Athena. We are so glad it has been built, because we feel worshipping Athena, the of the arts, of peace and prudent intelligence is so important for our well being. It is a terrible sin not to pray to and worship the gods isn't it? You did tell me there was a temple near you, didn't you? Oh, I didn't tell you what our new temple is called. It is called the Parthenon. It is a beautiful structure. I like to think that generations upon generation of people will worship in the Parthenon in all its beauty. There are sculptures on the outside created by a man called Pheidias. The sculptures are so lovely. The Parthenon is made out of beautiful white marble. There are many beautiful tall columns surrounding it. It is lovely to look at, so lovely that there are no words in the Greek language to describe it fully and accurately. You must come see it. You will love the Parthenon.

I haven't seen you for many years, and I miss you very, very much. Since I miss you so much and I'm sure you love the Parthenon so much, why don't you come to visit? You could bring your husband and your children and we could [illegible]

a chance to worship in the Baptist church. As I have never seen the accomplishing of you, please come!

Love always,
Your sister

Sample 15, Page 1
Sandra Stotsky, teacher
Grade 6
New York City Public Schools

FIRST DRAFT

2/20/83

1687

Dear Diary

Something really awful has happened. That building that is just outside my door and up the hill from our house is in ruin. It was owned by the Venetians. It was owned by a Venetian still. My father said that the Ottoman Turks, who, as you know, are occupying Greece, chose to store ammunition in the Parthenon. This was outrageous to begin with, yet since it had been used for everything from religious purposes to living accomodations, I don't suppose we should be too surprised that ammunition was stored there. Still it was a horrible shock to see it completely blown up. I was so startled. They've completely blown the roof off my beloved Parthenon. I hope one day some great people will search through the pieces of

marble scattered all over the Acropolis hill and try, just try to put together this beautiful building again. Somehow I feel its spirit will last forever.

Sample 16
K. Kelley, teacher
Grade 6
Plymouth Public Schools, MA

Social a sec
Mr. Kelley period 3
January 12, 1982

Mr. Kelley

If I were a member of the English government, to help the Irish people I would send some food from English farms and distribute the food to the people.

I would also send medical help to the diseased people. I would try to bring as many of the Irish people over to England. I would send ships with as much supplies as possible. I would do the best I possible could to help Ireland to become like they were before.

I would take money from my own family and support a family or two and take donations from other people and countries.

You also could supply the Irish with cattle or any other form of livestock. Mainly cows and chickens because they supply more than meat. Such as cows produce milk and sheep, and chickens supply eggs and poultry.

Sample 17, Page 1
Sandra Stotsky, teacher
Grade 5
New York City Public Schools

January 27, 1983

Museum Floorplan
1st Copy

The Museum of Natural History in Creekville, Colorado consists of rooms in a specific order beginning with the "Geographical Regions" room. This room shows you different kinds of land, how to use different kinds of maps and the elevation of land masses.

The 2nd room is the Mammals room. Much like a giant hall surrounded by glass showcases, it shows almost all mammals in its natural sorrounding. This room is 2nd mostly because mammals are shown in there natural and geographical setting.

Next is the fish and birds room which are usually predatored by mammals. Glass showcases and models show different kinds of birds in flight, mating and birth and for the fish there is a small aquarium showing different fishes.

Reptiles and Amphibians are sometimes predators of fish, which makes this the

very basic plan

subject of our next room. The exhibit shows them from birth to adulthood. The theatre also shows a film on reptiles and its life cycle.

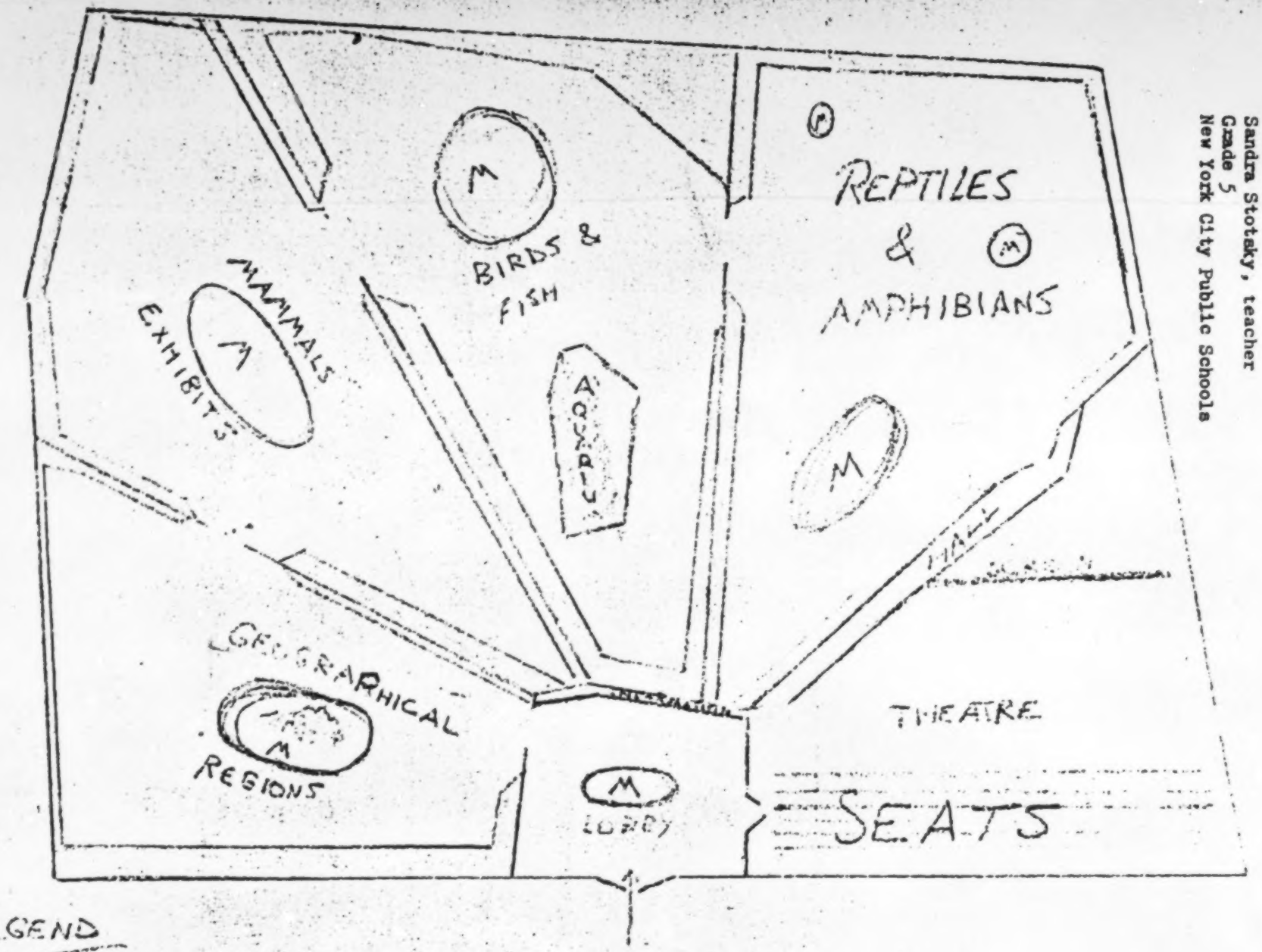
The last room is the film theatre which shows films on all kinds of animals from their birth to their death. After seeing the film and before leaving, look at the model in the lobby. It shows a family with animals from each race. Its meaning means that the more we kill without purpose we are actually destroying ourselves because once all is gone, we must go to. Try to keep that in mind.

This is a thoughtful & well written draft. You've given an excellent reason for your order & subjects to be viewing. The paper seems to be moving only as a introductory general overview sentence telling the reader what you are moving from & the dependence of forms of life on each other & lower forms. A really fine opening.

Very basic punctuation errors

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Sample 18
Sandra Stotsky, teacher
Grade 5
New York City Public Schools



LEGEND

M = MODEL

40 GLASS

bird's eye view plan

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This is an extremely well-written piece. Very imaginative and great thinking. Well done on paper. Very imaginative and great thinking. Well done

Sample 19, Page 1
Sandra ~~Stotsky~~ teacher
Grade 5
New York City Public Schools

For your final draft, just rewrite this neatly

Museum Project

I have been to Natural History many times. I chose to redesign a human body area. I believe in realistic exhibits therefore I will create a human body floor like the part in the Boston Museum. If you enter through the main entrance there are two doors, one is Solar System and the other is Science and Technology.

These are two excellent paragraphs that give the reader all the important introductory information.

The Solar System has many facts on the planets, the stars, and other things having to do with the Solar System. Science and Technology has information on oil, gas and heat, also minerals and rocks and sockets. They are above the brain because man must investigate these area. Next is the main attraction the body.

Inside, like a corpsule of blood, you travel through the entire body. This is 3 stories high so you can see the different layers in your body. At each organ you can pick up a phone (household type) and hear about the organ's importance to the system and what it does. The brain has a special feature. Inside is the computer for a "computer brain."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Mammals and Reptiles are on either side of the feet. They have glass cages with stuffed animals and some like animals. Above that, is a bridge that this man downward.

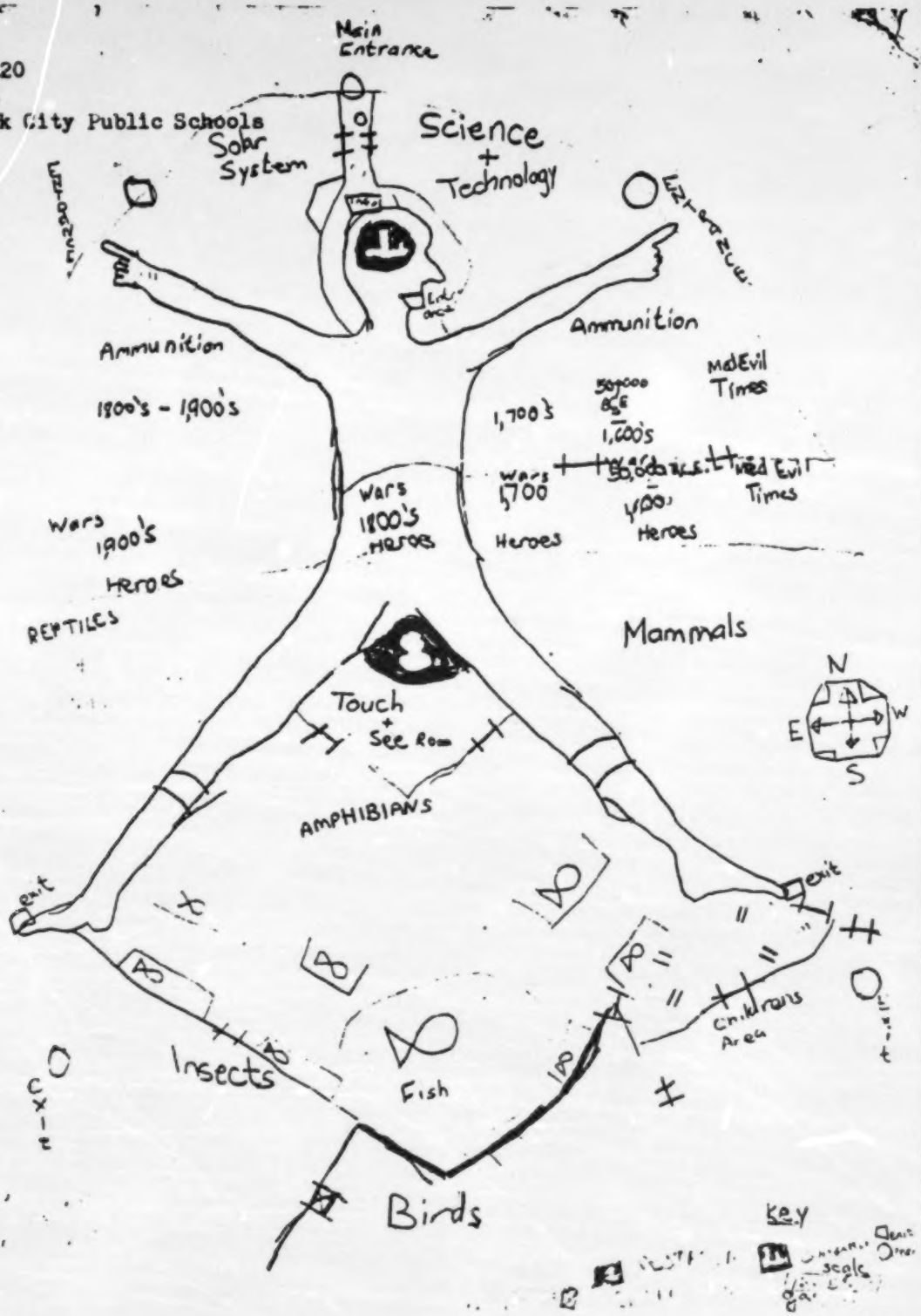
On one side of the bridge is war heroes, the other side was the identification of the war. Above that is the ammunition used at that time. If you go south through mammals (land creatures) on the opposite side of the bag is the water creatures - Amphibians and fish. The Amphibians, are the same ideas as mammals and Reptiles. The Fish, like the Boston Aquarium, have small tanks for tropical and tiny fish. The large tank in the center is for sharks and other larger fish. Keep going south and there's the total opposite of fish, species, birds and insects.

interesting throughout

The insect room has 4 movies and facts. Next, go through a revolving door. Like the Bronx Zoo the birds roam freely inside. Some cannot because they are a dangerous species. Once you go through the children area you can exit this museum. You have completed your tour. How do you have any respect for your body?

sit this is to personal

Sample 20
Grade 5
New York City Public Schools



A

Sample 21
Elizabeth Cordeau, teacher
Grade 7
Plymouth Public Schools

Miss Cordeau

The perfect society for me,
Would be peaceful and orderly.

Where not one harsh word is ever spoken,
or a rule is ever broken.

Where the sun shines brightly,
and cool breezes blow ever lightly.

Where houses with white picket fences stand,
and beautiful flowers are scattered cross the land.

Where money would no problem cause,
because of expensive tax laws.

Where rich dark soil would always yeild,
abundant foods from fertile fields.

Where there would be,
no poverty.

This would be,
my perfect society.

Your have created an interesting pictorial image. Nice job